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FOREIGN NEWS ON CITRUS FRUIT

THE MARKET FOR GRAPEFRUIT IN AUSTRIA

Grapefruit has been on the market in Vienna regularly since war restrictions were removed, but in very small quantities, according to G. C. Haas, American Agricultural Commissioner at Vienna. One dealer, an importer, who sells to retail stores and who himself operates six or seven of the best retail stores, imports practically all the grapefruit brought into Vienna. He is very enthusiastic over the prospects of increasing its consumption, both in Austria and in other Danubian countries.

Little, if any, grapefruit was being consumed prior to the war. After the war this dealer imported a few boxes to see if the fruit could be sold. He succeeded in selling it after some effort, as the people were unfamiliar with the fruit. They judged from the appearance that grapefruit were big lemons. The next year the dealer bought and sold a few more boxes. Other dealers began to buy from him just as a matter of keeping a complete stock of fancy articles. This year he expects to sell around 150 boxes, and believes that sales can be greatly increased if efforts are made to familiarize people with the fruit.

Advertising proved very effective in introducing bananas and in increasing their consumption, according to this dealer, and he believes that similar efforts would be effective with grapefruit. The people of the country as a whole, are in bad shape financially, it is true, but grapefruit would be eaten if popularized. It is now used mainly for fancy dinners and other special occasions, but its use as a breakfast article has very good possibilities, in the dealer's opinion. He believes that in a short time street-vendors could handle grapefruit along with oranges, bananas, and other fruits.

This dealer has also sold some grapefruit to Budapest and he thinks that it could be introduced with success in practically all other Danubian countries. It is quite likely, however, that the trade as now handled would be very small in volume at the prices that would have to be secured at this distance from the source of production.

The dealer buys his grapefruit through a representative in Hamburg where the fruit is repacked. He stated that he paid \$7.09-\$7.42 (50.42 - 52.80 Austrian Schillings) per box in Hamburg. The fruit is sold to Vienna retailers at 20, 22.5, 25 and 28 cents (1.4, 1.6, 1.8, and 2 Schillings) per piece, according to the size. Retail prices run 25, 28, 35 and 42 cents (1.8, 2, 2.5 and 3 Schillings) per fruit. Canned grapefruit is also sold in Vienna. The dealer is of the opinion that when a larger grapefruit trade is established in this section of Europe that Trieste will be a much better port than Hamburg for importations. Any means of cutting down the amount of damage and otherwise reducing the cost of the fruit will help to increase its sale.

Due allowance should be made for the fact that this information on the marketing of grapefruit in Vienna has been largely contributed by one man. The outlook is undoubtedly promising from his point of view, since he constitutes practically the whole trade in the fruit. Prospects are different when viewed from the standpoint of American shippers accustomed to deal in hundreds of cases and carlot shipments. Austria should not be passed up, however, in any comprehensive and well organized plan for developing the European market as a whole. Vienna is one of the four largest cities in Europe and is the distributing point for a large area.

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